A SPEECH OF A COMMONER OF ENGLAND TO HIS FELLOW COMMONERS OF THE Convention.

Mr. SPEAKER,

THE present Providence deserves our most serious thoughts; and truly Sir I cannot but say that we are extreamly oblig'd to the great Goodness and Valour of the *Prince of Orange*, who with such hazard and expence, has brought us so seasonable and eminent a Deliverance from *Popery* and (I hope)

from *Arbitrary Power* also. Sir, we cannot give him too much, unless we give him more than our own, the *Crown* I mean: We have been of a long time taught, that it is not the gift or work of Subjects. *Sovereign Princes* have made bold with one another, but I am of opinion, whatever malice may suggest against his Highness, he has too noble a Soul to be guilty of such an attempt; he came not hither for greatness, he has it of his own, and brought it with him, and values being *Optimus* more than *Maximus*, which is the best way of joyning that Imperial Stile together; *Optimus Maximus*: I say, I am confident it is more than he will judge proper to receive, and that he will think it more for his glory *to reduce the Monarchy to its Just and Legal Establishment*, than to be *King* himself; and to secure us against *Popery*, than to lead us into the Errors of it; of which the most pestilent are the *Deposing Power* and *Breaking Faith with Heretick*s.

Mr. *Speaker*, The *Prince* is too great a Disciple both of Religion and Honour, not to be satisfied with our doing what is agreeable to them, and let us press him out of his own Sentiments, which have been the Greatest and most Heroick that have appear'd in this latter Age of the World; least whil'st we have taken Arms to redress Grievances, we don't draw greater upon our selves, and that as well from abroad as at home.

For Sir, when we believe *Catholick Princes* to have a Zeal so unreasonably fierce and unsafe to other People, we cannot at the same time think they will tamely suffer a *Catholick Prince* to be kept out of his *Kingdoms* for little more than being so, and I am afraid that this Proceedure may precipitate *Ireland* into extremities, and if it should follow, the *King* to *France*, as sober sensible men know of, what ill Consequence a revolt to that *Crown* may be to this *Kingdom*: We shall then instead of *Invading France*, find difficulties to *preserve our own Countries*, nor for what I see are we sure of being at *Peace here*.

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The *Tide* has mightily abated *since the Kings going from Rochester.* Those that wished his Humiliation in the Government, will by no means hear of his *Exclusion and Perdition from the Crown*; they either believe the fault none of his, or not of weight enough to justify so extraordinary an Example. *Kings must see and hear by the Eyes and Ears of others*, which makes it their Misfortune rather than their Crime that they do amiss: We are also of a *Church* that has been singular for her *Honour and Deference* to Kings, and if we have any for her, I think we ought to tread tenderly in this Point; and that we may be just, Two Things compel us to it for our own sakes.

The First is, That the most of the Things that made the King's Government so obnoxious, have already been done in this, we have had a *Dispensing Power* exercised both at *Exeter* and *London*; we have had *Free Quarters* constrain'd in almost all Places where the *Dutch Army* has marched; we have in great part a *Popish Army* too, tho' that was one of the most crying Offences we objected to the King, and from which we drew the most popular Notions of our insecurity: The very *Money* that is now receiving, was asked with *Two Armies on foot*, and all men will conclude it was ill refusing a Proposal so Seconded: And how far our Famous *Petition of Right* may be concern'd in this, the Gentlemen of the Law must determine; but I dare say, this very *Loan* could not escape it under a lawful *Prince*, and under our present Circumstances we cannot reasonably think the Case better.

Nor, Mr. *Speaker*, is this all the Caution, the Second Reason for our *Temper* is, the little truth that at last appears in those many Stories that above any Thing seem'd to alien the Hearts of the Subjects from his Majesty, and to dissolve that Tye of Affection and Duty they had to him, as his Subjects, such as *the Alarums we had here of a* French *Invasion*, *the King's Selling the Kingdom for Five Millions Sterling*; *the* Irish *Killing Man*,

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Woman and Child upon the Roads, the French *Embark'd for the West, but Met and Sunk by the* Dutch; *the Forty Thousand new fashioned Knives of Slaughter; the Queens Back-door for bringing to Bed a false Child; her Cuffing the Earl of Craven and the Princess Ann*; with Forty more of that Stamp, that *Time* has proved as malicious as false: How much they have influenced to this present *Great Change*, is not unworthy of our just thoughts and censure; and in my opinion it calls upon us as loudly for a speedy *Reparation.*

Mr. *Speaker*, these are the Things that have driven the King out of *England*, and if it can be prov'd the *Prince of* Wales *is an Impostor, and that there was a League with* France, *to cut off Protestants*; I think nothing that has befallen him too hard measure for him, but truly Sir, it is upon no other Terms that the People of *England*, will part with their King, or with any patience think of the usage he has had upon that Supposition.

But it is Objected, That some of those that were in Arms, *are under apprehension least their Estates and Lives should be at the Mercy of the King, if he Returns*; I think the King will be so far from expecting, and the Nation from yielding to it, that they must not only be all Pardoned, but those *Lords* and *Gentlemen* that have been the Noble Assertors of our *English Liberties* at this Juncture, must be posted in the greatest Places of Honour and Trust: I hope the King himself, will see it his Interest to leave off little and parisitical Favourites, and be willing that such be Employed in all his Affairs, as his People can Confide in, and as will use their Preferment for the Honour of their *Prince*, and the Good of the *Subjects.*

Mr. *Speaker*, The Objection against the Kings Return, upon the accompt of having deserted his Kingdoms, by going into *France*, I am astonished at; since it is plain, he did not *voluntarily* desert us, (as the *Queen of Sweedland* did her Kingdom) but

but was Attacq'd from Abroad, and Deſerted at Home. Conſequently Sir, it cannot be in good *Morality* as well as *Law*, *Demiſe*, *Forfeiture*, *Surrender or Abdication of the Crown of England.*

Mr. *Speaker*, I fear that if I have not tired your patience, I have been at leaſt over long for ſome Members of a contrary Judgment, who ſit in this *Convention*, and therefore I ſhall only add this humble Caution,

That our *Convention* Conſider well their Power, which I humbly conceive, is too ſcanty to be able to make a New King, tho' it may call home That to whom we have moſt, if not all of us *Sworn Allegiance*; nay let me ſay further, that if our Caſe was ſo deſperate, that no Remedy would ſerve but Creating a New King, our *Convention* has not *enough of our fellow Subjects* for the reſt to be Concluded by. When Things are transacted according to the Known Laws and Antient Cuſtoms, the *uſual Deputies* may deliver and ſtate the Intentions of the People, but when ſo many and great alterations muſt be made in the Building, that is to be for the common conveniency, every Man thinks himſelf to be conſulted as well as the greateſt Architect, when he is to dwell in the Houſe.

Parliaments that are Called by Kings, cannot Make Kings, and a Convention not called by a King, and as narrow bottom'd as a Parliament, is yet leſs than a Parliament, becauſe it wants the Sanction that a Parliament has.

If then it ſeems a Sœliciſm, that a Meeting leſs than a Parliament can Make a King, without whom a Parliament cannot be; What ſhall we think of this Conventions Making a King of him that Makes the Convention? Can they Act Lawfully upon an Unlawful Call? or an Unlawful Convention Make him a Lawful King? We are taught by an Engliſh Proverb, that *no Stream riſes higher than its Fountain*; How is it then poſſible for them to give him Authority to Govern, *that have*

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none but what they receive from him, who by our Law can have none to give. Sir, This is neither more nor less than for his Highness to make himself King by a medium of his own, a thing as much below him to Do, as it is above us to Think of.

Therefore if we must go to that Work, let us call in more Heads to our Assistance; but I rather Advise, and humbly Move, that,

We Pray the Prince, who has been our *Deliverer* to be our *Arbitrator*, *to give due Limits to the Prerogative and our Liberty*, to secure us that are the *Protestant* Subjects, in our *Religion*, and to shew the King what sort of *Liberty* he only ought to expect for his *Roman Catholick* Subjects.

I say, Let us beseech him *to call back the King for these Great Ends*, the Accomplishing of which will make both King and Kingdom Happy, and the *Great Prince of Orange* Renowned in all the *Histories of Europe*, as well as in our *Own Annals*.

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